District_____#_____

Personal Faith Statement

In one sentence define or describe your personal faith statement for the following terms:

1) Christianity:

2) The Trinity:

3) Jesus Christ:

4) The Holy Spirit:

5) The Bible:

6) Salvation:

7) Work of the Holy Spirit:

8) The Church:

9) Baptism:

10) Holy Communion:

Demographic Information

Age_____ Race_____ Gender_____ District_____

Prior Denomination_____ Years in UFMCC_____

1) In your own words briefly describe your present theological perspective. (e.g., liberal, evangelical....)

2) What influence has your church background had on your personal statement of faith?

3) What contributions has MCC had on your present statement of faith?

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TO: GENERAL CONFERENCE 1983
FROM: JENNIE BOYD BULL, CHAIR
SUBJECT: REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON FAITH, FELLOWSHIP AND ORDER

At General Conference 1981, the following mandate was unanimously adopted for FFO (moved by the Rev. Jennie Boyd Bull and the Rev. Howard Wells, seconded by the Rev. Brent Hawkes and the Rev. Karen Ziegler):

> "Because we are the priesthood of all believers, and because we are committed to Christian education within UFMCC, it is our Christian joy and responsibility to encourage broad examination of theological issues in this Fellowship. Therefore, the General Conference instructs the Faith, Fellowship and Order Commission to report to General Conference in 1983 with the following mandate:
>
> 1. To research, discuss and propose to the Fellowship a Statement of Faith, using Article III of the UFMCC Bylaws as its starting point. This process will include the grass roots study method and development of study questions, soliciting input from clergy and laity in every congregation, district, church extension area and member of UFMCC congregations.
> 2. To, in particular, apply that research to theological implications of any linquistic changes in the Statement of Faith as adopted at General Conference 1981.
> 3. To develop and disseminate study questions to be considered as UFMCC develops a Christian theology of sexuality."

By May 1982, a full commission of lay and clergy representatives from 11 Canadian and U.S. districts had been elected for two-year terms, in addition to representatives from the Australian districts, the Hispanic Americas and United Kingdom/European extension areas, Samaritan Education Center advisors, and a liaison elder, totalling 30 people. (See attachment A for a list of representatives and the meetings they have attended.) Representatives from all eleven Canadian and U.S. districts have attended at least one FFO meeting.

Although no funds were available for meetings of the commission, two full meetings and two working meetings have been held, as FFO has worked on fulfilling its mandate.

In April 1982 a working group of ten representatives met during Eastern Clergy Conference in Edgewater, MD to begin work on the mandate. Due to lack of funding, the group agreed not to propose bylaws changes for the statement of faith at General Conference 1983. FFO planned a series of workshops on Basics of the Christian Faith, to be offered at district conferences and by other means throughout the Fellowship, with the purpose of gathering grass roots input and encouraging dialogue on the statement of faith and on a Christian theology of sexuality. The commission agreed that questions of spirituality and sexuality are fundamental both to developing a Christian theology of sexuality and to examining our statement of faith and its language changes.

By November 1982, the first workshop, Basics of Christian Faith I: Sexuality and Spirituality, had been offered to 400 participants in workshops throughout UFMCC, and by General Conference the workshop will have been offered in all Canadian and U.S. districts (in some districts several times at different locations). The second workshop, Basics of the Christian Faith II: Statement of Faith, also will have been offered in all districts by General Conference. The United Kingdom/Europe extension area has also participated in this process, although the Australian districts and other extension areas have not.

In November 1982, following Western Clergy Conference, a full meeting of the commission was held in San Francisco, with 20 participants representing all but the Northeast District. (Many districts funded travel of their representatives to this meeting.) The Commission developed a format for reporting the results of the workshop on BCFI: Sexuality and Spirituality. (See Attachment B for an informational report on the results of this survey.) The commission also collected comments and summary statements from the second Workshop, BCFII: Statement of Faith. This workshop has been uniformly less well attended throughout the Fellowship. Input from the Northwest, Western Canadian, Southeast and South Central districts is available at the FFO Commission Fiar display for your information.

At this meeting, the commission also initiated a series of articles for JOURNEY on sexuality and spirituality, sharing the varied perspectives of individual FFO representatives.

The commission also drafted a preliminary set of study questions for a Christian Theology of Sexuality, using a brainstorming process that included imput from each district. (See Attachment C for the preliminary draft). This draft, plus additional input from May district conferences, will be considered by the Commission at its preconference meeting, and the final study questions will be made available at the beginning of the conference.

In February 1983, a working group of 11 FFO representatives met to plan a workshop for the May district conferences, BCFIII: Study Questions for a Christian Theology of Sexuality, and to plan the Friday night worship service for General Conference. B.J. Couvion, MidCentral lay representative, was appointed assistant chair, with the concurrence of the Board of Elders. The Commission noted with regret the absence of Black MCCers as representatives from any district and encourages districts to consider racial inclusivity in their upcoming October elections of FFO representatives, who will serve until October 1985. Until racial representation improves, FFO requests the Task Force on Third World Ministries to elect a lay and clergy representative as members of FFO. The commission also affirms its understanding that student clergy are not eligible to serve as lay representatives on the commission, but may serve as clergy representatives.

At its July 8-10 preconference meeting, the commission plans to finalize study questions for a Christian Theology of Sexuality and to develop workshops and other plans for the coming two years, focusing on those study questions. It is the opinion of the Commission that the present Statement of Faith, as amended for inclusive language at General Conference 1981, is adequate for the Fellowship at present, and that we need to grow in other ways, especially around issues of a Christian theology of sexuality, before we focus on the statement again at a general conference. Therefore, the commission will be presenting a resolution to the conference, requesting a mandate to focus on developing a Christian theology of sexuality until general conference 1985. This resolution will be finalized at the preconference meeting and available at the beginning of conference.

The commission is excited about the grass roots process it is developing, a process based in each district, emphasizing lay involvement, and focusing on increased communication between the local and Fellowship levels, with the district as a central point for offering educational resources and programs. FFO representatives plan to play an increasing role in strengthening our districts as supportive and educational bodies, in particular through dissemination of resources provided by Samaritan Extension Center, making available local resources to an entire district or our Fellowship, and developing workshop models for use Fellowship-wide. It is the goal of FFO to be responsive to the entire Fellowship and to model an inclusive process that "depoliticizes" theology, helps us accept and learn from our diversity, and grow together around our unity in Christ Jesus. As the words from a hymn we will sing Friday night at the FFO communion service proclaim:

> "Walls that divide are broken down, Christ is our unity.
> Chains that enslave are thrown aside, Christ is our liberty."

+ attended April 82 meeting
* attended November 82 meeting
† attended February 83 meeting

ATTACHMENT A: Clergy and Laity Representatives to FFO

DISTRICT	CLERGY	LAITY
Eastern Canada	+* Clarence Crossman Holy Fellowship MCC London, Ontario	Samm Brock MCC Toronto Toronto, Ontario
Northeast	†+ Marge Ragona MCC Boston, MA	† Bob Bruso Worcester, MA
MidAtlantic	+* Marianne Van Fossen MCC of Northern Virginia	To be filled May 83
South Atlantic	† James Brock MCC Atlanta, GA	* Victoria Landes St. John's MCC, Raleigh, NC
Southeast	†+* Joseph Gilbert King of Peace MCC St. Petersburg, FL	†* Tad Lincoln Christ MCC Miami, FL
Great Lakes	† Patrick Kader Dayton Parish MCC, OH	* Carol Ann Kyrias Good Shepherd Parish MCC Chicago, IL
MidCentral	†* Candace Adams Springfield Family MCC, MO	* B.J. Couvion (vice chair) MCC Greater Kansas City, MO
South Central	* Jo Crisco Agape MCC, Fort Worth, TX	* Sally Sumerall MCC of the Resurrection, Houston, TX
Western Canada	* Ernie LaCasse (Alt. For) Phillip Speranza MCC Calgary, Alberta	* Michelle Carmody MCC Vancouver, B.C.
Northwest	+* Betty Pedersen MCC Willamette Valley, OR	+* Jack Hubbs Golden Gate MCC, San Francisco, CA
Southwest	* Roger Webb (to be confirmed) Long Beach, CA	* Chuck Russell MCC of the Pomona Valley, CA
South Australia	Vacant	Graham Caldwell MCC Adelaide, S.A.
North Australia	Vacant	Vacant
Hispanic Americas	Bern David ICM Santa Cruz, Tucson, AZ	Jesus Maisonet ICM Hispana, Long Island City, NY
United Kingdom & Europe	Jo McVay-Abbott MCC Birmingham, England	Vacant
Samaritan Advisors	†+ Jeffrey Pulling Hartford, CT	+†* Sherre Boothman, MCC Rockville, MD +* Lucia Chappelle (Resigned) Los Angeles, CA
Chair	†+* Jennie Boyd Bull, MCC Baltimore, MD	
Liaison Elder	* Jeri Ann Harvey, MCC Los Angeles, CA	

ATTACHMENT B

A REPORT ON FFO WORKSHOP, BASICS OF CHRISTIAN FAITH I: SEXUALITY AND SPIRITUALITY

To be Gay and Christian strikes many as a contradiction in terms. Yet to those served by the Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC), both terms apply. A series of workshops sponsored by the Faith, Fellowship and Order (FFO) Commission since General Conference 1981 is reaching many Gay and Lesbian Christians who have at some time in their lives wrestled with these identities.

This report describes the findings from workshops held in 1982-83 in five districts in the church, in Western Canada, in the Los Angeles area, and in Mid-Central, South-Central and the Mid-Atlantic districts of the United States.

The workshop format, set forth in a seven-page packet, provides a structured, supportive, nonjudgmental basis for exploring awareness of sexuality and spirituality as they have evolved through life histories unique to each group member. The data in this report are from the sexuality and spirituality time line worksheets – life events plotted over an age-graded time line, given the value of "peak" experience or the "valley of despond" weight by the rise and fall of the line in each individual's graph. The peaks and valleys and points along the way are labeled as they occur to each person in a kind of free association flow. For example, a woman in her 30s marks by a point at the trough of a downward sloping line, that places her over the 5-9 age interval: "felt parents disapproved of my sexuality (Tom-boy type crushes and behavior)." Or, a man in his 40s at the top of a jagged mountain peak of line marks it (over the age 25-29 interval): "first time I fell in love with a man."

By General Conference 1983, all eleven Canadian and United States districts will have offered this workshop, but additional results were unavailable at the time this report was compiled.

The workshop leader's instruction for introducing the Sexuality Time Line exercise, after opening with a prayer, and asking persons to fill out demographic information on the worksheet, is to read the following script to the group:

"The bottom line of the graph is divided into five-year segments indicating the years of your life. The lefthand line (perpendicular) indicates your sexual growth and experience. Beginning with your birth, draw a time line indicating your sexual growth and experience from your earliest memories to the present. Make notes to mark any major experiences, such as coming out, breakups, first time you masturbated, etc.

"All of us have major ups and downs, and this is primarily for you, so be honest. Define sexuality any way you wish; include any experiences you wish. You will have 15 minutes to complete this . . . (then) complete the "God feels . . . " sentence about this time line."

Thus the events and their weights or values are unique to each person's personal biography. The patterning of sexual and spiritual events becomes clearer to each participant when the workshop leader asks everyone to put the sexuality and spirituality time lines on top of each other and hold the translucent pages to the light: "What can you learn about how your sexual experience has related to your faith experience? How has your sexual development affected your faith?" he/she asks.

We have learned from the data that many come to MCC in the midst of an identity crisis about their homosexuality, often after other routes have been exhausted. In choosing a church instead of/or in addition to a stigma-conversion agency, Gay community center, or a Lesbian-feminist branch of NOW, for instance (or, in an earlier period, the Mattachine Society or Daughters of Bilitis), our respondents seemed to be searching for an affirmation that they once felt within the churches of their childhoods. Our respondents were not raised un-churched, but many have become so. In the midst of the pain that these responses reveal, Metropolitan Community Church captured the imagination in unexpected ways, and becomes in the language of sociologists Laud Humphreys or Barbara Ponse the opposite of homophobic, an institution of stigma-redemption.

We are dealing, then, with the life course of persons who have become "spiritual Gays." Their unique responses indicate regularities that can be categorized and tabulated and summarized. A 23-page coding sheet was used to extract data from the FFO workshops held in five districts of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. The sample is non-representative; the population, members, friends and clergy in the local MCC orbits. The initial tabulations for this study have been conscientiously completed by FFO persons in each of the participating districts.

Demographics

The sample consists of 117 persons, 62% male (N=73), 38% female (N=44). Most are white (104 out of 117). The median age of respondents is 32. (Only 3 teenagers participated in the study; and only one person older than 60. About a fourth are in their 20s, and the remainder, two-thirds, are in their 30s and 40s). More than 400 people have participated in this workshop process throughout UFMCC, but additional responses were unavailable by the time the report was written, in early February.

This mature group of 117 persons shows a commitment to UFMCC over the years. Half report an affiliation from one to five years; 28% for five years or more. One-fifth have been involved in the church for less than a year.

All but ten list the denomination affiliations of their youth. Six of the 10 were never church-identified. Four did not respond. No one mentions "new religions," such as the Moonies, or "ethnic religions," such as Black Muslims or Orthodox Jewry, althought a Southern Californian mentions an interest in Eastern religions.

Three-fourths are mainline church in up-bringing (using Dean Kelly's classification as reported in Martin Marty, 1976). The highest number are Catholic (25), followed by Methodists & Baptists (17 and 14) and Lutherans (7), Presbyterians (6), United Church of Canada (5), Episcopalians (5), United Church of Christ (2) and Greek Orthodox (1).

About one-fifth of the respondents come from evangelical or fundamentalist backgrounds (22). One identifies herself with a pentecostal church.

The Sexuality Time Line

Slightly fewer than half (55) mention masturbation in their sexuality time lines. For both men and women, the most remembered time of heightened masturbatory activity fell in the 10-14 age bracket, at the onset of puberty and of hetero- and homosexual interest.

Less than half (45%) mention heterosexual sexual experiences on their sexuality time lines. Women are more likely to do so than men. (2/3 of the women report heterosexual sexual experience; only 1/3 of the men do.)

A smaller proportion, less than 2 out of 5, mention heterosexual relationship, ie, couple or lover bonding. Again, women are more likely to report such involvements than men (57% of the women, 29% of the men). About one-fifth of the sample refer to marriage (and all who did mention divorce).

One can conclude from the lack of reporting of heterosexual-related events in the time lines that (a) many have never been involved in heterosexual sexuality, or (b) in the context of a Gay church workshop they didn't tune in to that aspect of their sexuality, or (c) its valence was weak or insignificant in their sexual histories.

For some in the sample heterosexual-related experiences are remembered negatively, associated with incest (7%), rape (8%), prostitution or hustling (2%).

Yet, when given weight as a "peak" experience or "valley," as 25 out of the 53 reporting heterosexual experiences did, more rate it as a peak experience (15), than as a valley or trough (10) in their time lines.

Most mention homosexual sexual experiences (88% of the respondents in four districts did; no homosexual sex was reported by one district, although homosexual relationships were).

Men begin earlier than women (before age 15). By the same token, men may foreclose their sexual identity earlier, too. For example, 76% of the respondents report bonding in homosexual relationships. However, 37% of the men bonded in a Gay lover relationship before age 20. (About 24% of the women did).

More women report establishing Lesbian-committed relationships in their 20s (about one-half of the women in same-sex relationships did so then, compared to a fourth of the men).

Holy unions or rite of blessing are reported by 10% of the sample. Another 20% appear to be involved in long-term Gay/Lesbian marriages.

In general, relationship formation in the sample does reflect differences in Gay-Lesbian life styles. That is, 84% of the women in the study report such relationships (either currently or in the past) compared to 71% of the men.

As the marriage and heterosexual experience data indicate, many in the sample are or were bisexual. On the other hand, some mention only homosexual sex and/or homosexual relationships and may be exclusively Gay (32%). 9 out of 117 report current or past periods of celibacy.

The peak experience on the sexuality time lines with the highest frequency was "my first homosexual relationship." (50 out of 117 mentioned it.) Next, in rank order, are "first homosexual experience" (47), "coming out" (30), "awareness of and acceptance of sexuality" (27).

The down side is reflected in the breakup of a homosexual relationship (weighted as a trough by 36), with the next two in rank order, "the breakup of a heterosexual relationship" (18), and "struggling with Gay identity" (13).

The costs of being Gay run throughout the workshop data. At least 22 (19%) report times of severe emotional distress. Twelve mention palpable sanctions – incidents of discrimination against them that affected their life course (such as, a popular Gay student organization leader expelled by a fraternity). Eighteen (15%) said they left a church because of perceived hostility toward them as Gay. One dropped out of seminary because of a similar reaction.

Struggling with a Gay identity has at times led to despair. Twenty-six (22%) report it as a trough on the spirituality time line. Five report suicidal thoughts at one time or another related to this struggle. Sixteen said they felt they couldn't be both sexual persons and spiritual persons at the same time. Eleven said they once believed that they were bad because they were Gay.

Yet breaking through this struggle, like the dolphin shooting through the bounds that confine it for air, is the "coming out" experience. 41% (40 out of 98) indicated on their sexuality time lines that they had voluntarily "unmasked," or exposed their Gay identity to significant others. (38% of the women mentioned it; 32% of the men did. The tabulations from one district are not reported in this category.) After sex and relationship, it is the third-ranked peak experience on the sexuality time line (30 responses). (Note: on the other hand, 4 reported coming out as a trough experience.)

Given the fear of exposure many have also reported (8 report it as a trough on the sexuality time line), a crucial mediating structure may be the church itself. In the "God feels" section of the sexuality worksheet, 82 (73%) report "I feel God is accepting of my sexuality" in their responses. Fourteen percent report some ambivalence in God's concern about them; 4% reject the notion of a personal God who feels about them. None said that they felt that God rejected them.

The Spirituality Time Line

The format for recording faith experiences is similar. Baptism was mentioned by almost half of the respondents. For 20, it appears as a peak experience. Many remember the sunday school experience of childhood (37%) and confirmation (15%; 10 marked the latter as a peak experience). Fourteen attended a parochial school or a sectarian college.

Almost half mention a church group or the church experience as a significant part of their growing up or young adulthood. Yet, some of these persons report a period of non-observance (47%). The teens and young adulthood were equally likely to be a period of alienation from the church.

At least 20 have experienced a call to the ministry. Nine report it as a concomitant of their MCC experience. Eight report entering seminary; 3, ordination.

The "discovery" of MCC is mentioned as a peak spiritual experience by the majority of the respondents (60%). Another cluster of spiritual highs relates to their relation to God: "reborn" (23%), period of intense spiritual growth, including Bible study (22%), a feeling of being "in harmony with, at peace, loved by God" (18%). (The tone of these responses is repeated in an open-ended "I feel about my spirituality" question.)

The valleys in the spirituality time line relate to memories of doubt about faith, the Bible, theology and a time of non-observance that followed. (Doubt about faith is the category with the highest frequency among all the "lows" in the spirituality time line. It is reported by 46, or 39%, of the respondents).

When asked to think about the relation of one's sexuality to faith (open-ended question), the largest single response is: "now I feel that my sexuality and spirituality are positively interrelated." Thirty-six percent reported a response

in this vein. The next highest response mentioned a deepening of faith (34 or 29%). Twenty (17%) said, in effect, "Now I know God loves me." Twenty-four (21%) said, "I am asking God to guide me."

The picture that emerges is of a body of men and women whose sexual identity has been at some time problematic for them in society, who have returned to the church after leaving it, and are joyously affirming not only their spirituality, but their sexuality as well.

God Experiences

The last component of the workshop data relates to the attributes of God as one who listens and as one who speaks to and works through those who wrestle with major life decisions in a spiritual context.

Most of the respondents raised up occupational or professional decisions and in the private realm relationship issues. They were then asked to imagine how a God that is characterized as Fatherly, Motherly, Lover, or unspecified ("open") would respond to these most salient personal issues.

In the data from the four districts participating in this exercise, the most striking quality of God's response, speaking as inner voice and through others, is that of nurturance. Wrote a 26 year old Baptist female in "God-speak:"

> "Lay your head on my breast and touch me there, and I'll
> encircle your pain, my little one, and healing can be done."

One-third of all the responses, in content analysis, were evaluated as nurturing.

The next most frequent response is that of a "permissive" God (28%). Typical is: "Whatever will make you the happiest and most content." "Anything you do is all right and fine with me."

A more directive, positive-norm-reinforcing, or rational quality to the responses, emphasizing mutuality in decision-making over laissez-faire, dependency, or coercion is coded as an "authoritative" God response. An example is from the worksheet of a 39 year old Baptist female: "I am with you even in your sexual life. You must give of yourself to be able to receive from others."

Or, from a 41 year old Catholic male: "You'll have the power to grow in love, regardless of your decision." 18% of the God responses were coded "authoritative."

Thirteen percent mentioned "authoritarian" qualities in the God response. For example, a stern injunction is reported by a 36 year old Catholic male: "Opening the relationship would not be a wise move." Or from a 33 year old Catholic female: "Be patient. I will let you know what is right for you."

About 5% of the responses were "sexual." For example, from a Catholic male mentioned above (the tone is camp or double-entendre): "We'll wrestle with it." In similar vein, from a 47 year old Catholic male: "Are you being fair to me?"

Or, from a 31 year old female, from a Disciple of Christ background: "You have a lot of love to give as I know well –don't let it become jealous or possessive."

When "gendered" in the exercise, the Fatherly God typically is pictured as "authoritative" (one-fourth of the responses assigned a Father God). However, Permissive, Nurturant and Authoritarian responses were apparent in almost equal doses (about 23% each).

The Mother God is perceived by over half (51%) as Nurturant. However, about 20% each of the responses also characterize her as Authoritative or Authoritarian.

The Lover God is high on Nurturant responses (one-third). Another fourth portray the Lover God as Permissive. About 12% each emphasize Authoritative or Sexual qualities.

The "Open" God is defined by most of the respondents as a personal, caring God. 37% of the respondents describe the Open God as primarily Nurturant. Permissive (25%), Authoritative (18%), and Authoritarian (13%) qualities follow.

We return to our initial concern. What does it mean to be Gay and Christian? From the quality of responses in our study, it means to be open to self-understanding and to the empowering affirmation of God's grace.

Jacqueline K. Parker, PhD.
for the Commission on
Faith, Fellowship and Order

ATTACHMENT C:

For Information Only

PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF STUDY QUESTIONS FOR A CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF SEXUALITY, Nov. 1982

Purpose Questions:

How does a theology of sexuality enable us to reach people with the saving knowledge of Christ?

How does Christ in Resurrection liberate us from sexual oppressions in our expressions, relationships and civil liberties?

a. Sexual theology, sexual spirituality, Christian sexuality, sexual Christianity, relationship of God and sexuality.

b. What is the difference between Christian sexual ethics and behavior? (values, morality?) What is the basis on which we make sexual decisions as Christians?

c. Gendered Christian social ethics

d. Scripture and sexuality

e. The Church and Sexuality (Worship, Sacrament, Mission, Body of Christ)

f. What is sexuality? Why sexuality?

g. Self worth and right relation.
(God in our personhood and relationships)
(Theological psychology)

h. Sexual Brokenness and Restoration
(Healing) (Sin, sex and salvation)

BASICS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH: 1

District____ #____

A. Sexuality Time Line

God Feels_____

Demographic information: age____ race____

district_____

gender ____

prior denomination_____

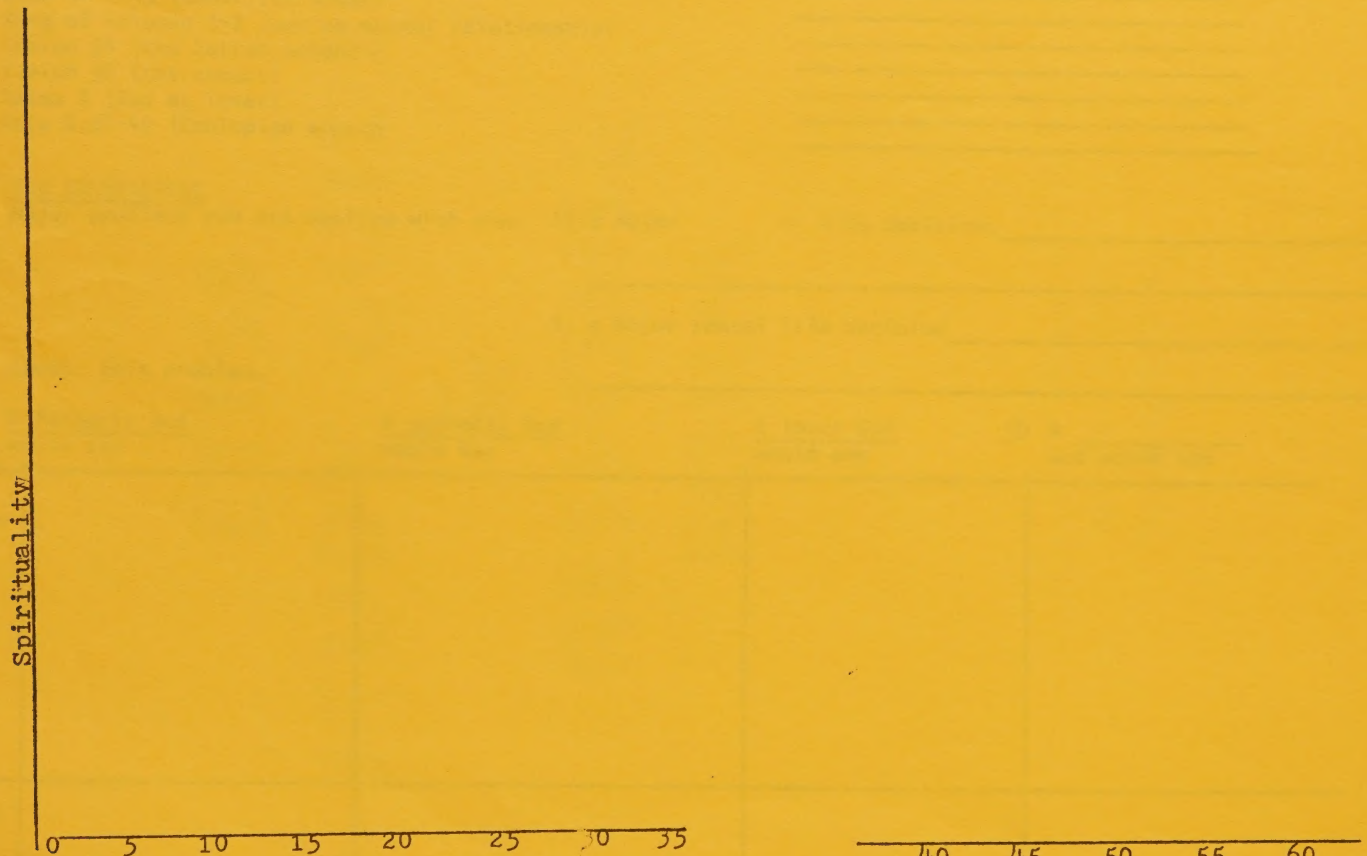
years in UFMCC_____

BASICS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH: 1

District___#_____

E. Spirituality Time Line

I Feel_____



How has your sexual development affected your faith?

_____

_____

_____

_____

District _____ #_____

C. SEXUAL STORIES AS SACRED/SACRAMENTAL EXPERIENCE: SCRIPTURE STUDY

(note those most important to you, or add others)

I Samuel 18: 1-5, 20:30-42 (David and Jonathan)
Ruth 1 (Ruth and Naomi)
John 4: 1-45 (Samaritan woman)
Song of Solomon 1-2 (sex as mutual relationship)
Isaiah 54 (the barren woman)
Isaiah 56 (the eunuch)
Hosea 2 (God as lover)
Acts 8:26-40 (Ethiopian eunuch

Other:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

D. GOD EXPERIENCES

Major problems you are dealing with now: 1) a major life decision: _____

_____

2. a major sexual life decision _____

About this problem, _____

	A fatherly God would say	A motherly God would say	A lover God would say	① A _____ God would say
1. decision				
2. sexual decision				

ETFSS STUDY GUIDE & RESPONSE FORM

For General Conference XVI
July 18-25, 1993
Phoenix, Arizona

ETFSS STUDY GUIDE

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Response Form	Insert

Upon completion of the six units of study, ETFSS asks each study participant to complete the response form, inserted in the study guide and send to ETFSS no later than June 1, 1994.
(If extra response forms are needed, please contact UFMCC)

INTRODUCTION

After much prayer, reflection, and hard work, the Elders Task Force on Structures and Systems (ETFSS) has prepared this Study Guide. It is our hope and prayer that you will use this to guide your own study and reflection process. This study guide is not a bylaw proposal or a definitive statement of structure. This study guide invites every member of the UFMCC to participate in reflecting upon ETFSS structural deliberations which have taken place during the last two years. We deliberately designed this guide so that it could be used in multiple ways. It is set up so that it can be used by an individual, for personal meditation, a local church, small group study, or even a district. It can be used as a workshop, as a retreat, or as a discussion tool for forums. We consciously chose to develop a flexible tool to empower individuals and / or groups to be creative in their process for reflection and study.

As a denomination of diverse people committed to a faith journey that is directed by a faith vision, we sought to find ways to empower people to vision and journey with an open heart. We struggled to develop a simple format of reflection that has profound implications for our future as a denomination. Part of our process was to reflect on our own diverse journeys in the midst of our collective faith unity. We wish to share with you our theological reflections, our questions, and possible models of answers that we feel God led us to during our time of journey together as ETFSS. The charge that was given to us is an awesome one and a challenging one, but we met the God of Awesomeness and Possibility in the process of our journey in the most unlikely places and with a diversity of people from throughout the Fellowship. The power of the Holy Spirit has moved mightily among us to bring us to a place of unity. The witness of this is in this Study Guide. There were times we doubted that our call, our journey, our destination, our purpose as a world-wide denomination was not **unique, new, blessed,** and **sacred.** Our time together, our charge, our process, and our results (this Study Guide) have changed that doubt to a firm faith that rests on Holy Ground. The prologue and closing of the "Great Commission" has new meaning for us: "When they saw Jesus they worshipped him; but some doubted . . . and Jesus came and said . . . Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:18-20). In our moments of doubt and struggle, we met Jesus and we remembered that with God all things are possible.

It is our hope and prayer that you too will meet God anew as you journey through this Study Guide. When you, too, find yourself on Holy Ground, you will know that with God all things are possible. We also hope that you will be as excited as we are to be a part of the **unique** and **new** things God is calling us to as a denomination. "God said, 'I hereby make a covenant. Before all your people I will perform marvels, such as have not been performed in all the earth or in any nation; and all people among you shall see the work of God; for it is an awesome thing that I will do" (Exodus 34:10). "So that the Body of Christ may be **built up until we reach unity**" (Ephesians 4:12). **Our witness** as a denomination of diverse people, nations, and faith journeys is **God's witness** that unity can take place in diversity if God's people are truly willing to be in partnership with God and one another in seeking Oneness. "May they be brought to complete unity **to let the world know that You have sent me and have loved them as You have loved me**" (John 17:21).

HOW TO USE THE STUDY GUIDE

The Study Guide can be divided into six units for study:

Unit 1: Guiding Principle 1
Unit 2: Guiding Principle 2
Unit 3: Guiding Principle 3
Unit 4: Guiding Principle 4
Unit 5: The Charter Of Affiliation
Unit 6: A Model For World Organization
Diagram Of The World Organization
Glossary Of Terms
Funding Considerations
Proposed Timeline
Tough Questions

It is suggested that each unit be considered in sequence, allow ample time for reflection. The six units could also form the basis of a six session small group study, taking one unit per session.

For Units 1-5, you may wish to follow this outline:

1. Open with prayer
2. Read the "Introduction" to the Study Guide if it is the first session
3. Read the "Guiding Principle"
4. Read the Scripture References
5. Read the Theological Reflection
6. Allow time for quiet reflection
7. Allow time to consider what the readings have meant to you personally. You may use the printed questions as a guide, or consider some of your own. Think about what your reflections challenge you to continue or to change in your life.
   If you are working as a group, what do these readings say to you individually and as a group? What things in your collective life do the readings challenge you to continue or to change?
8. Be sure to allow ample time for exploring questions and answers.
9. If you are working as a group, summarize the corporate witness of the group.
10. Close with prayer

For Unit 6, consider these four pages together: Diagram Of The World Organization, Glossary Of Terms, Funding Considerations, and Tough Questions. Read the first three pages, then use the questions at the end of Funding Considerations, A Possible Timeline, and the Tough Questions for discussion and reflection.

SUGGESTED OPENING AND CLOSING PRAYER

Loving Creator God, as we come together to discuss and plan for the furtherance of the work of this denomination, we ask that your spirit guides us in love, trust, and understanding, so that we may in community listen and acknowledge one another's views and opinions as we seek to discover your will for us.

Amen.

Dear God, in talking together we have discovered that the things that unite us are more important than the things that divide us. We have also discovered that we hold many of the same convictions, and we ask that you forgive us for the injustices that we perpetuate knowingly and unknowingly and that your spirit of love enables us to make those necessary changes which will help bring about your will for us.

Amen.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1: The source of our unity as UFMCC is our relationship with God in Jesus Christ as experienced in our faith, our journey, and our hope for the future.

Scripture Reference: John 17:21-23, Exodus 34:10, Ephesians 4:12-13

Theological Reflection: Unity as it is scripturally and spiritually experienced is not uniformity. Unity is not a resting place. It is a starting place. The source of our unity is our relationship with God as experienced in our faith. Unity is meant to draw us into deeper relationship with God and one another. The children of Israel experienced God as deliverer, provider, guide, and destination. Their story is a story of faith experienced. Their unity came through their common faith. The children of Israel became lost in their desert when they lost their unity of faith as a "called" people. They lost their unity when they lost their vision. They then began to seek uniformity, stopping to build an image to replace the real vision.

Unity is active, uniformity is passive. We meet God in Jesus Christ and are compelled to journey beyond our starting places, journeying toward our hope for the future. We journey for a purpose.

"So that the Body of Christ may be built up until we reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Child of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:12-13)

"May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." (John 17:23)

It is far easier to find resting places and seek to build images than to push forward seeking to follow the vision to which God has called us. We have been called into being as a denomination because God seeks to build new things rather than recreate old ones. We have been called to be a new people. A people who were once not a people are now a people on a journey for God.

"God said; 'I hereby make a covenant. Before all your people I will perform marvels, such as have not been performed in all the earth or in any nation; and all the people among you shall see the work of God; for it is an awesome thing that I will do." (Exodus 34;10)

The journey that we are called to has a purpose, a destination. The purpose for which we journey is "so that the Body of Christ may be built up until we reach unity." (Ephesians 4:12)

The destination we seek is found in John 17:23: "May they be brought to complete unity." The destination is unity, not uniformity. But this unity to which we are called extends far beyond our local church to the world "to let the world know that you have sent me and have loved them as you have loved me."

The source of our unity as UFMCC is our relationship with God in Jesus Christ as experienced in our faith, our journey, and our hope for the future. We must not lose sight of our vision and must allow that God given vision to lead us forward into the next millennium.

Questions: What brings us together in unity in UFMCC? What separates us?

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2: The structure of UFMCC should allow all pastors (lay and clergy) to fulfill all the functions of the office of pastor, thereby reflecting our commitment to the priesthood of all believers.

Scripture Reference: 1 Peter 2:9-10 ; Ephesians 4:11-12

Theological Reflection: Theology and "ordering" of ministry in UFMCC confronts us with some of our greatest challenges to "unity in diversity." The church, through history, has argued over the biblically or theologically "correct" way to "order" ministry. Being an oppressed people, reluctant to offend each other over "non-essentials", UFMCC has practiced an open-ended, laissez-faire theology of ministry. Early on, we decided to use some terms (elder, pastor, clergy, laity, deacon) and avoided others (priest, bishop, superintendent) for reasons that may be lost to us now. Getting the job done was more important than what we called it. However, we have ended up with Board of Elders (and now, a General Council) which has become a modified "episcopacy" that includes men, women, laity, and clergy, and that is subject to reelection. Is this what we want? What kind of spiritual leadership do we want? Have we created spiritual leadership by politics? What does God want?

We have only an outline of a theology of sacraments, communion and baptism, in the UFMCC Bylaws that simply avoids historical divisions on the very nature of the sacraments and rites. There is no official sacramental teaching in the UFMCC. Does there need to be?

We ask individuals and the denomination to go to great expense to license and ordain clergy for a lifetime ministry who are trained to pastor. However, at any one time up to one-half of UFMCC clergy are not pastoring a church, but are engaged in other ministries, some not directly related to word and sacrament. Meanwhile, many churches are without clergy as pastors, and there is not adequate funding for most clergy to be fulltime in their ministry. Clergy continue to function as a class in a two-house system at (District and General Conference) that accords them one vote per one person while laity have one vote per one hundred persons. Is this what we want? What does God want?

Some interpret "priesthood of all believers" to mean that laity may preach, preside over the sacraments and some of the rites. However, laity do this often without formal training, support, supervision, and without the privilege accorded to clergy and sometimes without much accountability.

We affirm that all Christians are called to ministry (1 Peter 2:9-10), but we are divided about how gifts for ministry are "distributed" and about how authority to minister is conferred (Ephesians 4:11-12). Do we need more uniform, consistent theology and practice? Or is UFMCC called to be open-ended, unfinished, an ecumenical sign of the changing concepts of ministry in the post-modern world?

Meanwhile, what are the appropriate symbols for ministry and church office in UFMCC? What about differences in status, privilege, and accountability for clergy and laity?

Questions: What is a clergyperson's role in the UFMCC? What is a layperson's role in the UFMCC? How do these two questions affect your local church? How do these two questions affect our "image" as a denomination?

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3: National, regional, and world administrative structures should nurture and serve local churches, allowing greater autonomy and shared responsibility throughout all structures and levels of government.

Scripture Reference: Luke 5:4-5 "When Jesus finished speaking, Jesus said to Simon, 'Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.' Simon answered, 'Teacher, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything."

Theological Reflection: The most visible relationship for the denomination is that between its local church and the community it serves. If the denominational office has a weak relationship with the local worshipping church bodies, the heart of UFMCC, the work of that organization will be limited, and that holds true throughout the structure of the denomination.

While structures and relationship are important, the main focus guiding the work is our global vision. "Put out into deep water and let down the nets for a catch," says Jesus. There is a danger that part of the problem of our structured organization may lie in the over-concern for matters of standardization and trivia. It is often only when a system is challenged from outside that it is galvanized into action and growth,and trust levels begin to rise. A creative tension between all structures and levels of government will hopefully enable and empower the grassroots communities to keep up with where the Holy Spirit is trying to lead us.

Questions: How does your church celebrate and serve? How could the denomination better serve your local church?

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4: The UFMCC believes that each human being is, by his or her very being, a unique creation in this universe and deserves to be treated with equal dignity, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, age, physical or mental challenge, health status, gender identification, nationality, or economic status. This belief also applies to equality of access and opportunity to enable full development of the potentialities inherent in each individual. UFMCC affirms the universal priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:5-10). All members of the Church are called by God to a ministry of the Gospel of Christ in the Church and in the world. Equity and justice, as well as shared resources and power should pervade all structures and government.

Scripture Reference: Micah 6:8 "And what does the Sovereign require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." Amos 5:24 "But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-ending stream."

Theological Reflection: The spiritual insight that there is an essential interdependency of all beings and all things is not new. The insight teaches that potential exists within each person to work to free him or her from self-centeredness for a life of liberation and love, discovering his or her true self and authenticity. Such liberation cannot be achieved without access to food, shelter, education, health-care, employment and freedom from laws that arbitrarily limit the right to define one's true self. "I was hungry, and you gave me nothing to eat..." [Matthew 25: 42-45].

Improving the quality of life does not necessarily mean a higher level of consumption. Instead, a global view of life and all its dimensions means that UFMCC promotes and supports the structures and programmes which address social justice, and liberation from the artificial limits listed above. For justice to "roll on like a river," we must remove structures that impede that flow, and replace them with structures that reflect Gospel values. For righteousness to "flow like a never-ending stream," we must build systems that illuminate the moral dimensions of every major issue, in every cultural setting and in every country where our church's outreach exists.

Since its inception, UFMCC has struggled to educate those within and without its membership. The Church has spoken against and fought the injustices that limit any person's journey toward wholeness, including - but by no means limited to - issues reflected in the gay and lesbian agenda. It is our hope and prayer that we will be able to create ourselves, our systems and our structures anew, in a way that reflects our expanding diversity and empowers all of the unique human beings that our Gospel encompasses.

Questions: What are some of the injustices that affect your community? What injustices do the current systems and structures of UFMCC address? What injustices do the current systems and structure of UFMCC not address?

THE CHARTER OF AFFILIATION

Theological Reflection: "May they be one even as we are one" (John 17:22). The "oneness" that Jesus speaks of is an ongoing process of becoming. It is meant to be neither instantaneous nor easy. In his first sermon, Jesus quotes Isiah 61:1-2 as the challenge by the prophet to those present:

"The Spirit of the Sovereign is upon me./ Because God has anointed me/ to preach good news to the poor. God has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners/ and recovery of sight for the blind,/ to release the oppressed,/ to proclaim the year of God's favor."

Jesus spent the next three years showing the disciples and the world that "oneness" comes from doing God's will first and foremost, answering the call like Jesus did with active, meaningful ministry. Jesus's ministry met the needs of the people by answering God's question: "Whom shall I send?" with the same answer as Isaiah: "Here I am, send me."

So many of us came into UFMCC proclaiming Jesus's and Isaiah's response for ourselves. Some have answered that call as clergy, others as laity, but many have confronted closed doors in systems and structures that have frustrated rather than facilitated their ministries. How do we as a denomination answer the call to meaningful ministry? What are our priorities? Does ministry consist of the hat we wear or the collar we wear? Does ministry rest in an office or in specific gifts? What did Jesus believe to be valid ministry beyond the Isaiah passage?

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me . . . I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." (Matthew 25:34-40)

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them . . . and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you." (Matthew 28: 19-20)

The Charter Of Affiliation will be a covenant document and, as such, the unifying document of our denomination. The Charter will outline the many ways we are connected one to another, as individuals, as local church bodies, as national or regional organizations, and as a denomination. Pledging to uphold this Charter binds us in Spirit one to another. "May they be one, even as we are one" (John 17:22).

The Charter of Affiliation will be the cornerstone document for the Bylaws of the UFMCC. It will be the invocation of a covenant, recognizing the call of the Spirit to live in the full unity of Christ.

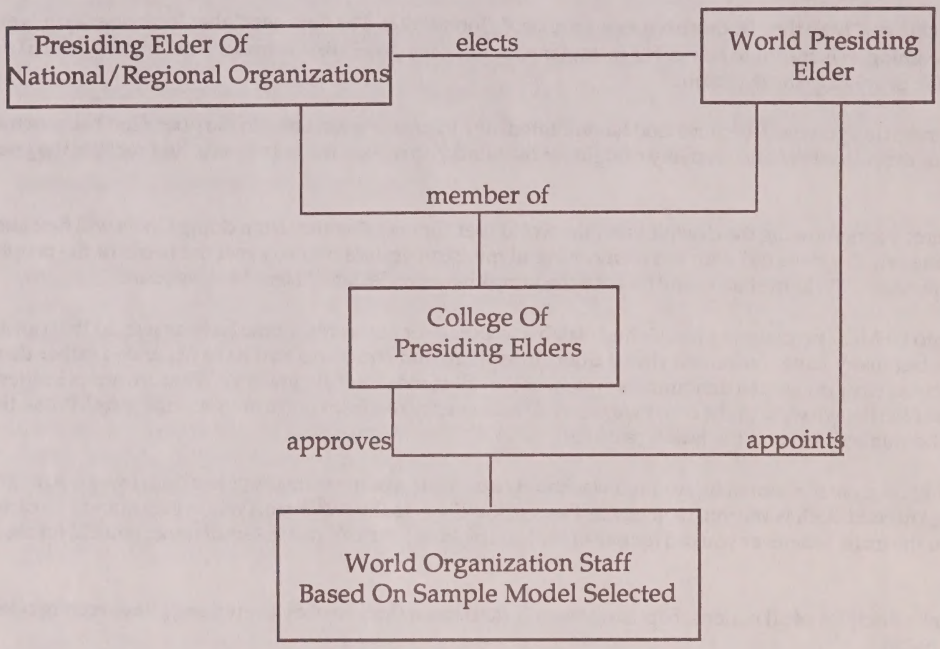
The Charter will also be a faith statement that presents the basis for our call to exist as a world-wide, inclusive, life-affirming denomination. It will be the cornerstone of our life together in Christ. The Charter of Affiliation will provide our foundation - the statement of our call; systems and structures will then be free to address the way we will fulfill the demands of our call. The Charter's spiritual consensus on why we are so called will help systems and structures to embody how to fully live out that call's challenge.

The Charter will be a prayer as well as a pledge - a prayer for the oneness with God that we seek among all the component parts of our denomination. It will be a pledge to live out the ministry and will of God in a spirit of unity rather than uniformity. Pledging to the Charter of Affiliation will free us to facilitate ministry by all of our component parts with a minimum of barriers among us. The Charter will set our spirits free to pursue the abundant life of the Spirit as unique human beings, without sacrificing our fundamental, unique call of unity as people of God. It will reflect that we are called to both serve and to celebrate; to be both unified and unique; to empower ourselves toward both oneness and development of each person's special spiritual gifts. We are both a "chosen people" - set aside by God as a whole - and a "called people" - summoned forth by God as unique human beings. Our task is indeed a challenging one!

Called in unity for ministry to a world of diversity... when we aim to duplicate the churches from which we were summoned forth, we are aiming too low. God calls us to aim high than our own imaginations can yet encompass, "So that the Body of Christ may be built up until we reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12-13).

Questions: How are we attaining the "whole measure of the fullness of Christ"? How are we preventing this from happening?

DIAGRAM OF THE WORLD ORGANIZATION



SAMPLE MODELS OF WORLD MINISTRY

Model A

1. Plan and conduct biennial meetings of the College Of Presiding Elders.
2. Plan the Jubilee
3. All other programmes / ministries will be done by the national / regional organization.
4. Minimal staffing

Model B

1. Plan and conduct biennial meetings of the College Of Presiding Elders
2. Plan the Jubilee
3. Provide a clearinghouse for reporting and communicating models of local ministries world-wide.
4. All other programmes / ministries will be done by the national / regional organization.
5. Increased staff required to accommodate increased functions.

Model C

1. Plan and conduct biennial meetings of the College Of Presiding Elders
2. Plan the Jubilee
3. Provide a clearinghouse for reporting and communicating models of local ministries world-wide.
4. Facilitate ministry in the area of Christian Community and Christian Social Action.
5. Includes Global Outreach as a world organization function.
6. All other programmes / ministries will be done by the national / regional organization.
7. Increased staff required to accommodate increased functions.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Charter Of Affiliation: A covenant document of the UFMCC that is the critical unifying document of the denomination. The Charter outlines the many ways we are connected one to another, as individuals, as local church bodies, as national or regional organizations, and as a denomination. Pledging to uphold this charter binds us in Spirit one to another. "May they be one, even as we are one." (John 17:22)

College Of Presiding Elders: Consists of the World Presiding Elder and the Presiding Elder of each recognized national / regional organization. The College Of Presiding Elders will meet biennially.

Deputy World Presiding Elder: Elected from the members of the College of Presiding Elders in order to serve in the absence of the World Presiding Elder. The term of office is coterminus with their term as Presiding Elder.

Global Outreach: Ministry designed "... to share the liberating gospel of Jesus Christ to all people of all races and in all countries. We are to be respectful of cultural differences as we present the vision of UFMCC, through media, literature, and visitation. Ths mission of Global Outreach is the establishment of indigenous, self-supporting, self-propagating UFMCC congregations which in turn fully participate in the witness and ministry of the church, local and universal." (Elders Task Force On World Church Extension)

Jubilee: A UFMCC gathering of people from around the world every ten years to celebrate and reaffirm the ties that unite us. All people are invited, attendance is not mandatory. It is not a legislative gathering.

National/Regional Organization: The structures, systems, and unifying principles which connect UFMCC church bodies which work together to promote ministry within a geographic area. A ***national organization*** is that type of national / regional organization whose geographic area of ministry is contained with the boundaries of a single nation. A ***regional organization*** is that type of national / regional organization whose geographic area of ministry lies within the boundaries of several nations.

Presiding Elder: Each national / regional organization shall select a person to serve as its Presiding Elder. The Presiding Elder serves as a member of the College Of Presiding Elders. The term of office is six years.

UFMCC By-laws: Document which defines the systems and structures by which the world organization will be governed.

World Organization: The way in which UFMCC is connected at a world level as embodied in principle in the Charter of Affiliation and in structures and systems in the UFMCC Bylaws. The two gatherings at the world level are the College of Presiding Elders and the Jubilee.

World Presiding Elder: Elected by the College Of Presiding Elders to serve as the primary spokesperson for the world organization. The primary responsibility of the World Presiding Elder shall be to give spiritual leadership in the areas of world evangelism, ecumenism, and social justice. The World Presiding Elder serves as the moderator of the College of Presiding Elders. The World Presiding Elder does not have to be a member of the College of Presiding Elders before election, but is a member after election. The term of office is ten years.

Funding Considerations

The world organization model reflects a commitment to the decentralization of government, allowing for national, regional, and cultural autonomy. In this proposed reorganization, many of the current responsibilities, i.e., credentialing, training, programming, etc., of the denomination would be assumed by national/regional organizations in order to bring those services closer to local church bodies. Three models of world organization ministry have been presented previously (Models A, B, C). Below are three possible ways (Models 1, 2, 3) in which funding can be achieved for any of the three models of world organization ministry that have been presented. The source of all funding for national / regional organization and world organization is the tithes and assessments from the local church.

Funding Model 1

a.All personnel consists of volunteers.
b.The World Presiding Elder is not compensated by the world organization.
c.The Presiding Elders of national/regional organizations may be compensated by their national/regional organizations, but are not compensated by the world organization.
d.National/regional organizations share the cost of the meetings of the College Of Presiding Elders.
e.National/regional organizations contribute seed money for the Jubilee.
f.National/regional organizations develop and fund all other programmes/ministries.
g.National/regional organizations donate time to meet staffing requirements.

Funding Model 2

a.Personnel consist of volunteers and paid staff.
b.The World Presiding Elder is compensated by the world organization.
c.The Presiding Elders of national/regional organizations are compensated by their national/regional organizations, not by the world organization.
d.Funding for the biennial meeting of the College of Presiding Elders is contained in the world organization budget.
e.Seed money for the Jubilee is contained in the world organization budget.
f.National/regional organizations develop and fund all other programmes/ministries in the national / regional organization, and some of the world organization programmes / ministries.
g.Compensation for additional paid staff is contained in the world organization budget.
h.National/regional organizations donate time to meet other staffing requirements.

Funding Model 3

a.Personnel consist of paid staff.
b.The World Presiding Elder and staff are compensated by the world organization.
c.The Presiding Elders of national/regional organizations are compensated by the world organization.
d.Funding for the biennial meeting of the College of Presiding Elders is contained in the world organization budget.
e.Seed money for the Jubilee is contained in the world organization budget.
f.National/regional organizations develop and fund all other programmes/ministries in the national / regional organization, and some of the world organization programmes / ministries.

Questions To Consider:

1. Local churches use volunteers from the local congregation for specific needs. From where would volunteers come for national / regional organization or world organization needs?
2. Currently there are personnel who have similar responsibilities but differing compensation levels (fully, partially, uncompensated). This inequity between expectation and compensation occurs at various levels: Elders, District Coordinators, Pastors. Will we create new systems and structures which simply continue the same inequity?
3. When uncompensated volunteers are used to perform vital areas of ministry, then the one who is chosen is often the one with the time and financial resources, but not necessarily the gift. How can we ensure that those gifted to perform the ministry can be enabled to minister?

A POSSIBLE TIMELINE

1993	General Conference Present Study Guide General Conference affirms the guiding principles for future ETFSS work
1994	June 1 Comments from Study Guide returned to ETFSS
	July ETFSS meets to review Study Guide comments create a proposed structural model develop first draft of Bylaws develop first draft of Charter Of Affiliation develop an implementation process for developing national/regional organizations
1995	January Proposed model, draft Bylaws, draft Charter Of Affiliation, and proposed implementation process distributed throughout UFMCC
	General Conference Present motion to adopt structural model Discuss first draft of Bylaws, Charter Of Affiliation, and implentation process Discuss process by which national/regional organizations will be developed
1996	March Final draft Bylaws and Charter Of Affiliation distributed throughout UFMCC
1997	General Conference Adopt UFMCC Bylaws and Charter Of Affiliation General Conference agenda designed to allow for adequate discussion of national/regional organizations.
1998	July Meetings by nation/region to create national/regional organization
1999	General Conference Election of National/Regional Presiding Elders College Of Presiding Elders meets to elect World Presiding Elder
2000	January 1 Full implementation of new organization

TOUGH QUESTIONS

1. As Christians we believe that every Christian is called to ministry. How do we effectively organize the "roles" of ministry? Consider:

    a. Do we organize the role's of ministry according to Spiritual gifts?
    b. What place does "calling" of the Holy Spirit have in how we organize the roles of ministry?
    c. What are appropriate signs and symbols of call or gift?
    d. How does credentialling validate a call?
    e. In what ways are the various ministries of laity and clergy validated?
    f. Are unified definitions of church practices necessary? What about church polity?
    g. Is there a point beyond which honoring our diversity destroys our unity?
    h. How is integrity of ministry maintained while honoring our diversity?

2. Historically, we have always have diverse forms of liturgy in our denomination which may have been the result of culture, location, previous church experiences, or local leadership.

    a. Is it necessary to have some uniformity in ways litury are order? If so, what should be uniform?
    b. Is there a limit to the freedom to be creative in worship? If so, what is the limit?

3. The government structures and system we create should empower all people to minister to the greatest of their potential.

    a. Do our decisions of who and what we fund raise issues of fairness and justice? What are some of the issues which should be considered?
    b. What makes a decision or action fair?
    c. What makes a decision or action just?
    d. Is "majority rule" always fair?
    e. Is "majority rule" always just?

4. Is it important that the leaders of the world organization or the national/regional organizations reflect the diversity of the peoples of UFMCC?
    a. If it is important, what kinds of diversity should they include?
    b. How is it possible to ensure that diversity is reflected by leadership?